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ABSTRACT

This paper, presented at the 1984 regional workshop of the Appalachia Educational Laboratory, draws upon recent research to list and debunk the following 10 "myths" about school improvement: (1) that change can be initiated simply by clarifying goals and designating staff (change actually requires three gradual steps--initiation, implementation, and institutionalization); (2) that improved instruction is costly (investment of time is actually more important than amount spent); (3) that practitioners don't know how to mount and maintain change efforts (research indicates, however, that they do); (4) that extended participatory planning is the surest path to school improvement (forceful leadership is essential); (5) that principals are the key to school improvement (central office administrators are generally more instrumental than principals); (6) that teachers will reflect innovations that they have not developed (simply untrue); (7) that small changes are safer and surer (true, but only major efforts produce serious improvement); (8) that materials, research findings, or new ideas by themselves will lead to change (practices are central, products are secondary, people are critical); (9) that inservice training is important only at the start (followup is essential); and (10) that successful innovations will stick automatically (not true, continual planning is needed). The paper closes with advice for school leaders on the importance of teachers in the change process, and a handout from the NETWORK, Inc., is attached, entitled "A Comprehensive Look at Efforts to Improve Schools." (TE)

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SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT: WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS

David P. Crandall

David Crandall is the founder and executive director of The NETWORK, Inc., Andover, Massachusetts. Now in its 15th year of operation, The NETWORK is dedicated to bringing together school people and helping them use R & D knowledge and knowledge-based innovations to improve their schools. In the past 15 years, Crandall and his staff have been involved in the design, implementation, or study of virtually every national dissemination effort focused on the improvement of classroom practice.

In 1978, The NETWORK was chosen by the U. S. Department of Education as the contractor for a major multi-year study of school improvement intended to expand the learnings of the earlier "Rand Change Agent Study." This large-scale nationwide study, which Crandall headed as principal investigator, mobilized teams of change researchers to study the dominant strategies sponsored by the Federal Government to foster school-based efforts to enhance instructional effectiveness. The results, reported in a 10-volume series titled, People, Policies and Practices: Examining the Chain of School Improvement, form the basis of Crandall's presentation.

The stimulus for AEL's conference on "Effective Schools" is the outpouring of reports and studies that have brought education, educational excellence, and improvement to the front page and to the front burner of our thinking. It seems appropriate to me to move beyond the rhetoric to consider some of the realities. My perspective is that of someone who believes we need to concentrate on implementation issues, the "now to do it," if we are going to make any serious progress. If 1983 was the year of atmospherics, then perhaps 1984 can be the year for serious action. If not, I think that we and our publics will find ourselves echoing the words of our latest folk hero, Clara Peller, "Where's the beef?" My belief is that we are at great risk of building and baking big, fluffy buns and not providing the profession or the public with the beef that we are asking them to pay for with their efforts and their dollars. In my

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remarks today, I hope to supply you with, if not the beef itself, at least some tips to use as you formulate your own recipes for making changes in your schools.

My remarks are primarily directed to school people, and to people who work with school people. The body of my talk is ten myths about school improvement and the realities as we discovered them in our research. I will close with six messages for school leaders committed to doing something back home. The "Study of Dissemination Efforts Supporting School Improvement" was a massive, nationwide effort that has occupied the last five years, the first three of which were funded by the Department of Education. We visited 150 schools across the country, and interviewed several hundred teachers, administrators, central office people, and consultants. More than 4,000 local educators responded to our questionnaires. The schools were a mix of elementary, junior high, and senior high schools in ten states representative of the continental United States. They were implementing one of 61 different innovations.

Before I begin talking about myths, I want to share five assumptions that undergird my remarks and my perspective on school improvement.

1. Schools are the only social institutions with the formal responsibility to provide learning opportunities for children and with the resources, in the form of dollars, buildings, and personnel, to do it. For the foreseeable future, the schools have the job.

2. The teachers that we have today are the teachers that we will have tomorrow; that is, if we can keep the good ones from bailing out or burning out. The recent fear of microcomputers displacing teachers has subsided. We know now that teachers are not likely to be pushed out by computers; if anything, we may be facing a shortage of closet space in many schools.

3. The improvement strategies for the past 15 to 20 years, even if they haven't reformed the enterprise, have helped

prevent decay. That is a nontrivial accomplishment. And these strategies must be capitalized upon if we are to hold our own. They must not be orphaned amidst the rage of reform that acts as if the problems that have been identified in our recent reports are new discoveries.

4. The school building is the most appropriate focus and fulcrum for school improvement efforts.

5. Strategies that focus on what Ted Sizer calls the student-teacher-subject matter triangle should be our primary concern.

The following are 10 beliefs that many people accept as truths. Based on our research and on that of others, I have come to believe they are myths, and I will briefly describe my reasons for each.

Myth #1: Change can be produced by waving a magic wand or hoping for instant pudding. This takes the form of a belief that clarifying or articulating your goals or designating someone as responsible for change will lead to improvement. It's just not that way. Listen to a letter from an appointee in a district that operates according to these beliefs to one of his colleagues in a neighboring district.

Dear Sir:

My Superintendent has just appointed me to the same position that you hold in your district. He has given me full authority to proceed and wishes me to carry on my new job without bothering him. What ought I to do? How do I go about my job?

Making someone responsible for improvement or simply setting up policies supporting it does not equal success. Waving a magic wand will not do the trick.

Contrast this hapless correspondent with the following, which is a memorandum from an assistant superintendent to a superintendent in the

midst of a process of surveying the needs in the schools and planning the attack.

We have received the surveys from all buildings and are analyzing them. As we discussed, the first step is to define problems and to set priorities. My initial findings are outlined below. I see three fronts on which we could move. The nature of the beast is such that we can effectively advance on only one major front at a time. Which shall it be: (1) our core curriculum, (2) subject matter dealing with the needs of our non-college crowd and directed at lowering our dropout rate, or (3) improving our computer situation? How involved in computer education should we be; in what form; how soon; at what levels?

I'm ready to join in the process of deciding where to start, but before we present our recommendations to the school board, let's be sure that we agree on the essentials and that we present them in such a way that it is clear that they are interrelated; that to unbundle them would be to neutralize the effectiveness of the entire plan. I think each option should include:

1. A recommendation for a program or programs to do the job that was tried and true. For our present needs, these exist and provide the surest and most cost-effective solutions.

2. Budget projections into at least the second fiscal year showing as much funding to sustain changes as to initiate them.

3. A time table which allows adequate time to complete the change process before being distracted by other demands. We don't want to orphan a new effort too early in the game.

4. A proposal to hire external consultants. There are now a fair number of groups involved in school improvement, so we have some choices.

5. Designation of a key person here in the district (someone from the central office would be the logical choice) to tend to all the details once the external consultant has left. This person would have many functions, from ensuring that supplies are adequate, to helping teachers on an ongoing basis. In general, to be sure that the program is being well supported and used as it was intended.

Please let me know if you have any changes to this essential plan.

Change is hard work. It does not come easily; it does not come quickly. Every recommendation of the various reports and Commissions will require changes to be made--sometimes in material or curricula, sometimes in strategies and behaviors, sometimes in organizational arrangements and structures, and other times in policies and regulations. Regardless of the type of change to be made, the people and organizations making them will undergo a change process. In tne past, particularly in large-scale reform movements, but also in periods of smaller-scale innovation, such changes have been approached as events. Announcement of new mandates, delivery of new sets of materials, and decisions to implement tne new program, were often seen as tne change. And just as often tney failed to make any difference in schools.

As a result of these early failures, researchers and practitioners alike know that change is a process rather than an event. It takes time to change behaviors, procedures, attitudes; to reorganize roles and responsibilities; and to create the materials, approaches, and resources. Further, it requires a complex array of activities. It is more tnan putting a new name on an old bottle. Tne change process has several phases. Some of these get ignored in the fervor of reform. Although every change researcher and theorist has his or her own nomenclature for these phases, a basic set would be initiation, implementation, and institutionalization. That's what it is called in the research literature. You might call it "gettin' it up," "gettin' it going," and "gettin' it stuck."

In earlier research on change and innovation, and in early efforts to reform education, a great deal of emphasis was placed on the initiation or adoption phase. Getting the right people involved, having appropriate planning and problem-solving sessions, and selecting the correct solutions were the activities most relied on during this phase. Activities generally stopped when the decision was made to adopt a given program or solution. When the Rand Corporation's federal change agent studies reported that certain federally-supported demonstration programs were failing to result in long-lasting changes in schools, one major failing they pointed out was the lack of attention and emphasis given to the implementation phase of the change process. Along with other researchers, they painted scenario after scenario of innovative ideas being developed and never being implemented; or being implemented in such a superficial way that no real change occurred. Practitioners began to focus their research and experiments on implementation, and they developed support systems to prepare participants and then nurture the use of new programs. It takes work; you can't wave a magic wand; and that kind of pudding--if it's instant--won't be very much worth keeping.

Myth #2: It takes a lot of dollars to get improved instruction. Many of the statements we hear deal with the imperative of massive new dollars if we are to accomplish anything. In our study, in school after school, we found teachers and administrators working together with what can only be called modest resources. Improvement efforts were sparked by the injection of only a few hundred dollars--not hundreds of thousands. They took advantage of the talents of teachers and the willingness of principals and administrators to invest their time. The average cost of

a meaningful improvement effort that begins in the classroom is under $5,000. That money is available. It does not need to come from outside of the system. There are proven, low-cost alternatives that can serve us well while we pursue greater resources for even bigger changes.

Myth #3: We don't know how to mount and maintain change efforts. The findings of our study converge with those of other recent studies of change, and they tend to converge with what practitioners tell us is their reality. We are in the middle of a curious phenomenon--at least it's curious to most researchers--where practice is informing theory as opposed to theory informing practice. From my vantage point, what we're seeing is an emerging soft technology of improvement; what I call "human-eering" in contrast to "engineering." We now know how to do many of the things that we simply did not know how to do 10 years ago. The tools are at hand, the talent is available, and the help can be arrayed.

Myth #4: Extended participatory planning is the surest path to school improvement. Another way this myth sometimes gets stated is that mandates are counterproductive. We saw increasingly that people who spend much time in protracted planning sessions have no energy left to do anything. It is analogous to many committee meetings where minutes are kept and hours are lost. The surest path to success, based on our studies, were the scenarios that we labelled "forceful leadership." Because this finding may be controversial or misunderstood, let me take a little time to elaborate on what we mean.

The key ingredients for successful adoption and implementation are generally believed to include the following:

- Access to alternative projects to adopt or develop;

- Face-to-face contact in adopting disseminated projects;
- Validated practices, when they're available, and carefully designed ones when they're not; and
- Adequate materials and procedural guidelines, coupled with responsive in-person assistance during later implementation.

There are many ways of combining these ingredients into a school improvement strategy, and these combinations are often more dictated than chosen by local cultures, constraints, and working arrangements. Still, there are things over which local staff across different settings have some consistent control. Institutionalizing a significant change of practice means making good on the ingredients listed above:

- Developing or finding the project;
- Getting it adopted;
- Getting some external resources for it if they can be had, or freeing up in-kind local resources if they can't;
- Getting authorization to take some administrative liberties, implied in the very fact that the practice means changing local arrangements;
- Keeping the gradient or incline of desired practice change high in the face of the inevitable stresses and strains;
- Providing ongoing assistance; and
- Building the new practice into routine operations, procedures, and regulations.

Unless the project is a collective crusade--a rare but existent species in our sample--making all these things happen involves administrative authority and access to external and internal resources. In our sample of sites, and more sharply in the 12 sites that we studied indepth over the course of a school year, the ingredients were provided most often and most fully when a central office administrator was involved closely with the project--from its development, if it was a local one,

or identification, if it was an external one, through its implementation and into its institutionalization. When that involvement was enlightened, forceful, resourceful, and long-lasting, highly significant practice changes were carried out and institutionalized.

Enlightened administrators were knowledgeable about the new practice. They also had substantive (i.e., curriculum coordination or instructional supervision) responsibilities rather than purely line-administrative jobs. Enlightened and forceful administrators pushed through ambitious changes and held tight to the initial magnitude of practice change that strained users and conventional working arrangements. This was a stressful situation because people had to undergo such a radical change in their instructional repertoire. This involved preserving largely faithful renditions of the original model, yet acceding to sensible demands for modification that were based on the shortcomings of the model; that is, there was adaptation allowed. It also involved some policing of the building level administration--heavily at the outset and selectively later on. Principals then monitored users--the teachers.

Adding resourcefulness to the equation meant just that: these people came up with external funding, freed up such local resources as release time and materials, and authorized some bending of local regulations to make the project work better. These are, of course, all things that central office staff have discretionary power to do, at least in most places. Most important, they put together an infrastructure for ongoing assistance. This infrastructure often combined local expertise, external consultants, and debugging mechanisms like hotlines, short

training cycles, regular meetings, etc. Pressure, knowledgeability, assistance, and exhortations from a senior administrator resulted in successful practice mastery and observable impacts that those users and building administrators who felt initially put upon, accepted at first grudgingly, then with satisfaction. Others, we should note, welcomed this kind of prescriptiveness. Finally, those advocates who stayed with the project, rather than turning away or turning it over to users, furnished more of these resources longer and attended to the critical task of locking the project into yearly routines, budgets, and regulations. The weakest projects were those that were progressively orphaned--first by their developers and trainers, then by the central office staff, then by the building administrators, then finally by users--such that nothing of substance remained.

It is important to stress in this that we are not advocating knee-jerk authoritarianism. There are other honorable ways to reach the goal of school improvement. We are suggesting that a central office administrator, who becomes an enlightened advocate of a new practice and actively assists building-level personnel to master it, has a better chance of actually delivering significant practice changes leading to school improvement than would be the case in most other scenarios. By delivering, we mean controlling what happens, reducing unnecessary detours, getting to the desired outcomes without blunting the original intent, extending the practice throughout the district, and making it a durable part of the local landscape. Other strategies are more democratic, but they are also more adventurous and, thereby, less certain to get these results. Also, such adventures are usually more expensive

and seem more feasible in time of financial plenty than in these times of scarcity.

Forceful leadership, therefore, is not the only way, but it is a more certain way. There is a place for both kinds of strategies--authoritarian and the more participatory strategies. We were surprised to find this emerging as strongly and powerfully as it did in the picture of the most successful efforts. These were situations that were characterized by rather rapid involvement and implementation versus planning. There were great numbers of teachers involved in these efforts and when we polled them as to their satisfaction and participation, 85 percent of the teachers in our sample reported satisfaction with the process and furthermore recorded that they had participated in the decision to adopt and to implement. So, they were not unhappy by this situation even though there was a lot of pressure being applied. The payoffs came and that made the process okay with the teachers.

Myth #5: Principals are the key to school improvement. The typical situation is that most efforts happen with the passive acquiescence of principals rather than their active assistance. The dominant posture of principals seems to be, "Don't bother me, I have better things to do." In one of our schools, the most important work and the most important contribution that the principal made to the improvement effort was insuring that there were the right number of glazed doughnuts for the workshop. The typical scenario in our studies sees the central administrator spending his or her time scanning the environment for alternatives, bringing them to the attention of the appropriate people at the building-level (teachers, designees of the principal), and mobilizing energies in

activities that are pursued with the acknowledgement of the principal and with the active engagement of the teachers. That central office person turned out to be the spark for the most important and successful of the efforts. They were the people who started them, sustained them, and provided the wherewithal for them to stick eventually.

Principals, like teachers, can be central, but they need more skills and more training if they are to make the contribution that is possible. In the meantime, efforts can be mounted that are not dependent on principals.

Myth #6: Teachers will reject innovations that they have not developed. Again, not from what we saw. From a teacher's point of view, everything is an externally developed innovation. It doesn't matter whether it was created at the district-level by a team of teachers (that didn't include them), at the state agency level, in another school district, or whether it came across state boundaries as a result of a regional laboratory effort or some other national effort. These are all outside of the reality of the individual teacher. Does that mean that teachers want to spend their time in invention? No. They want to spend their time in improvement, and they're willing to recognize and incorporate practices that are presented to them by credible, collegial people who can speak to their realities and help them to see how to do what others have done successfully.

Myth #7: Small changes are safer and surer. They certainly are. And you'll get just what you invest: very little. In our analysis, the only way that we could find anything that made a difference from an explanatory point of view was when we separated out the sites that had

attempted rather major changes from those who had tried minor changes. The message is, the harder you try, the bigger the mountain you try to climb, the higher you'll get. The big efforts are the ones that are worth it. While the little efforts may buff things up around the edges, they're not likely to produce any serious improvement.

Myth #8: Materials, research findings, or new ideas by themselves will lead to change. Well, materials have a funny way of acting like what they are: inanimate entities. No matter what size, shape, or pretty color the box is, by themselves they're very unlikely to produce much change. So it is with research findings. They typically don't come packaged as prettily, they don't come with quite as much sex appeal as curriculum materials, and they don't have as much effect as materials. Ideas about some emerging notion are even more abstract. What's needed for typical teachers in conventional schools (which is what most of the schools in the country are) is the transformation of materials into practices that help teachers see how something is to be done, that provide them with a new expanded repertoire of skills backed by materials and knowledge, and that will produce something different in the instruction that they offer their students in their classrooms. Practices are central; products are secondary; people are critical. For any other meaningful change efforts, the presence of substantial interpersonal assistance made the difference between success and failure. It's been confirmed in research study after research study. It's not that you don't need the new ideas, it's that by themselves they're necessary but not sufficient.

Myth #9: Put your emphasis on getting high-quality in-service at the start of an effort. Disseminators pay a lot of attention to getting their initial sessions in place. Much time is spent negotiating release time for teachers. Two-day workshops are very carefully orchestrated. That's fine. But if a major effort is being mounted, if there is a substantial difference between the current practice in the building and in the new practice, then that front-end training will do nothing more for most people than get them moving in the right direction. Only after some weeks or months have passed and their experience has expanded to the point where they now know what their questions and problems are, can they really take advantage of assistance. The message here is to reallocate some of the time for the back end. It doesn't necessarily mean adding time. If you can do that, that's great. But if you have three days at the front, take one and move it back four to six months. Build in consultant time or an extra opportunity for teachers to get together later. That's where it's most important. All too often teachers find themselves adrift just when they're beginning to have questions formulated in their minds.

Myth #10: If new programs are successful, that is, if they meet their goals--if the test scores go up, if the kids come to school, if the parents stop complaining--then the innovation will stick automatically. Not true. If you do not attend very carefully and programmatically to what researchers call "institutionalization," the whole enterprise is likely to blow away. A little turbulence in the outside system that you can't predict--some kind of a hassle over the tax levy, a teacher strike, an editorial in the newspaper--can displace the intention and the energy

that was previously focused on the innovation. We saw programs that had demonstrated dramatic achievement gains go down the dumper. And we saw at least one that was never actually implemented in the classrooms become permanent district policy. Classroom teachers didn't know what was happening. You must plan for institutionalization: work to allocate budget items to new programs, alter curriculum guidelines, and plan for continued training of new teachers. Success in this arena is not simply a matter of magic; it happens as a result of dedicated educators getting help to do what they want to do if they're given a chance.

I would like to close with six additional messages for school leaders.

First, in school improvement, the teachers are "where it's at." The action between the students and the teachers and the content of instruction must be center stage.

Second, I urge you to take the risk of being responsible and accountable with teachers. If you are a leader, tell teachers that they will be held harmless during the first year of their efforts to do something different, and that they won't get hammered if there's a downward drop on the test scores. They shouldn't be distracted from the major work of trying to learn a new instructional repertoire, especially if it involves a substantial change in practice. Regarding principals, the job of school leaders is to develop a firm but friendly policy (and procedures to back it up) for the successful development or replacement of principals. I think that principals are in tremendous need of sustained assistance so they can realize the potential of their jobs. Just as teachers are

willing to change, principals are willing to lead. But many of them simply don't have the necessary repertoire of skills. They need to get them. If you're a principal, take responsibility for getting them. If you're a central office person, see that your principals have the opportunity. If they can't get their act together, hopefully there are other positions for them in the district. If not, your responsibility is to move them out. Unfortunately, principals are in the middle of a pincer movement. Budget cuts will continue to come down from the top, energy and demands will continue to come up from the bottom, and they are right in the middle. They've always been there, but it seems to me it's going to get a little dicier in the next several years.

Third, as a school leader, articulate and demonstrate a commitment to competence. That means, among other things, nurture your central office sniffers, scanners, mappers, and matchers. They are your eyes and ears to the outside, if they're doing their jobs right. They're sniffing out what new things exist that have proven successful in other settings. Those folks are your bridge to the outside. They are the movers and shakers for activities on the inside. Take care of them; pay attention to them; give them money. We found that these were the people leading the improvement efforts, and working with the school faculties to produce change and improvement in classrooms.

Fourth, create the conditions conducive to change by clearly stating your image of an improved future, designating responsible leaders, setting realistic timelines, finding the energy, supplying the necessary assistance and resources, and building buffers around the people who are trying to do something different.

Fifth, presume professionalism on the part of your staff. Activate and reward it. Teachers are prepared to be professionals. Act on that presumption and you'll be money ahead.

Sixth, coach--don't criticize. It's possible to celebrate the changes that you've accomplished with the people in your district who are willing. Schools are improving at a rather reasonable rate. Perhaps not as dramatically as they have in past decades, but it's hardly the bleak picture that we have had painted by many. We cannot forego and forget the accomplishments of the past 10 years in holding off some very serious potentials for collapse. We cannot throw out the baby with the bath water.

Thank you for your attention. If you would like more information, there are a variety of booklets available. The study has been published in 10 volumes. (See Appendix A for a description of written materials.)

Participant: What was your most surprising finding?

Crandall: I'd say the most surprising finding was the importance of the central office person. We had gone into the study advised to pay attention to building principals, external agents, and teachers. We were quite surprised to discover that the key role was really being played by this district-level person.

Participant: Just to clarify, are you saying that the central office impetus has brought about the greatest amount of change and that this is where it should be in the first place and not with the principal?

Crandall: At bottom, what I would advocate is attention to the functions that need to be in place--not what roles they are attached to. The function that the central office person plays typically, in a successful effort, is this scanning and monitoring on the outside and then bringing a small number of possibilities to the attention of a building staff. Most often that person is positioned at the central office. I wouldn't want to make a "should" statement that would focus on role. I'd rather say at the

district level, attend to having somebody do that. In smaller districts it may turn out to be a principal or even a teacher that's been around for a long time and has gotten into the position of being the one who knows what's going on out there--kind of a defacto person responsible for curriculum development or for language arts. I'm not making "should" statements about roles, and I'm not saying to eliminate the job of principal.

Principals could and should be making a major difference. They should be instructional leaders. In districts where central office staff gets pared down, that function usually drops down to a building principal who has been around and is knowledgeable.

Participant: I have read some research that claims the individual principal does not have a high degree of individual discretion, that there are so many job demands placed on them that it's difficult to be initiating.

Crandall: I agree. That's a reasonable explanation. The reason it's going to get worse is that the pressure in the progressive states is toward more school-based management. That's an emerging movement. It is the norm in these things that people at the higher level think they've solved the problem once they've formulated the policy. That's one more thing that's going to land on principals, and they're going to just start sinking into the earth. That's why I'm advocating attention to their skill development needs, to the support they need, and at the same time, I'm acknowledging that some of them just aren't going to be able to cut the mustard in this new environment, so let's figure out humane but hard-nosed ways to deal with that situation too or else we're going to get hammered by the public.

HANDOUTS

A COMPREHENSIVE LOOK AT EFFORTS TO IMPROVE SCHOOLS

For more than a hundred years, people responsible for the schooling of our nation's children have been trying to improve education. For nearly twenty years — since the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act — the federal government has invested millions of dollars helping local educators develop and implement new practices in classrooms.

Over the years, as the number of successful new practices increased, the federal strategy moved away from funding more development and toward transferring what was already known to work to new settings. In the late 1970s, dissemination as a strategy for helping school people take advantage of proven innovations came into its own.

In 1978, the Study of Dissemination Efforts Supporting School Improvement was launched to answer such questions as:

- Has the federal investment in fostering innovation paid off for local schools?
- What conditions and activities favor success in school improvement efforts, and what stands in the way?
- What configurations of assistance to schools have what kinds of results?
- Do "home-grown" innovations achieve different outcomes from those imported from outside?
- Does placing administration, funding, and assistance at the state level effect improvement outcomes?
- How do strategies relying on person-to-person assistance differ from those used by commercial publishers?

To answer these and other important policy questions, the Education Department's Office of Planning and Evaluation awarded a multi-year contract to The NETWORK, Inc., Andover, Massachusetts. The NETWORK assembled a unique combination of individuals and organizations with expertise in school improvement research and, advised by a national expert panel, implemented a multi-staged design. Investigations extended from program offices in Washington, DC to classrooms in 146 school districts across the U.S. The effort resulted in:

- a map of the various strategies being used by federal and state governments to assist local schools to use new practices, including
  - * profiles of 45 federal dissemination or dissemination-related programs and activities;
  - * in-depth analysis of the history and underlying assumptions of 15 of these programs; and
  - * an examination of 10 states' efforts to support local implementation.
- a picture of what is happening in schools where new practices supported by government funds were implemented, including
  - * composite portraits of classrooms and schools in 146 districts where new practices were supported by 4 widely different federal strategies;
  - * case studies of school improvement efforts in 12 districts, developed through field work over the course of a school year; and
  - * an in-depth look at the characteristics and effects of assistance from sources both outside and inside local settings.

The overall result: A new understanding of the dynamics of implementation, and of the activities, conditions, and strategies that lead to successful change in schools.

This highly-detailed examination of the multi-faceted world of educational change and improvement will be useful to researchers, policy-makers, and practitioners alike.

VOLUMES IN THE REPORT SERIES

People, Policies, and Practices: Examining the Chain of School Improvement, Volumes I-X: David P. Crandall and Associates, The NETWORK, Inc., 1982 Price for total set: 150.00

Volume I: *Setting the Stage for a Study of School Improvement*, Susan F. Loucks, Joyce Ellyn Bauchner, David P. Crandall, William B. Schmidt, and Jeffrey W. Eiseman

In this volume, the study is set within a framework of federal school improvement policies and studies of these policies. The objectives, design, and research methodologies used in the study are described. 170 pages $18.00

Volume II: *Portraits of the Changes, the Players, and the Contexts*, Susan F. Loucks, Pat L. Cox, Matthew B. Miles, and A. Michael Huberman

This volume describes what was found in the 146 school districts that comprised our local site sample. Characteristics of the people, the innovations, and the settings are reported, as are the contributions of external assistance and the outcomes accrued from involvement in school improvement. 150 pages $18.00

Volume III: *Models of Change*, Joyce Ellyn Bauchner, Jeffrey W. Eiseman, Pat L. Cox, and William B. Schmidt

Causal models of the school improvement process, introduced in this volume, were used to help determine which factors influenced success. The findings are reported for several outcomes at the organizational (school) and individual (teacher) level, as well as for external assistance activity. The meanings of the findings for individuals in different roles are discussed. 100 pages $15.00

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